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REMARKS

In response to the Office Action mailed August 21, 2004, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the above-identified application in view the amendments and remarks presented herein.

Claims 36-44 are pending in the instant action. Claims 36, 38, 39, 41 and 44 have been amended. Claims 37 and 43 have been canceled. Claim 36 has been amended to correct the typographical error, and reconsideration and withdrawal of the objections set forth in the Office Action are respectfully requested. Claim 36 has also been amended to incorporate subject matter set forth in claim 37 and claim 43. Support for the amendments can be found in the specification, as originally filed, as well as the original claims.

Claims 36-45 were rejected under 35 USC 112, first paragraph as, according to the Office Action, containing subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention. This rejection is traversed based upon the amendment to claim 36.

Claim 36 has been amended so that the claim now specifically recites a chemically modified mutant enzyme, only, which has been sufficiently described in the specification. Applicants submit that amended claim 36 fully satisfies the Written Description requirement. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection with respect to claim 36, and claims dependent thereon, are respectfully requested.

Claims 36-45 were rejected under 35 USC 112, first paragraph because, according to the Office Action, the specification does not reasonably provide enablement for the full scope of the claim. This rejection is traversed based upon the amendment to claim 36.

Claim 36 has been amended so that the claim now recites a method for assaying a chemically modified mutant enzyme to determine the degree of removal of a protein stain from a material. Applicants submit that amended claim 36 fully satisfies the Enablement requirement. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection with respect to claim 36, and claims dependent thereon, are respectfully requested.

Claim 36, with dependent claims 37-45, was rejected under 35 USC, 112, second paragraph, for, according to the Office Action, failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the Applicants regard as the invention. Claim 36 has been amended to recite assay performance, specifically, an assay to determine the degree of removal of a protein

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stain from a material. Applicants believe that the claim now complies with the requirements of 35 USC 112, second paragraph, and reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested with respect to claim 36 and claims dependent thereon.

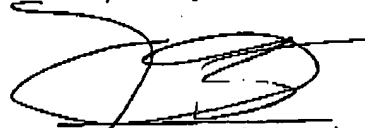
Claims 36-38, 40-42, 44 and 45 were rejected under 35 USC 102 as being unpatentable over each of Graycar et al and Sierkstra et al. These rejections are traversed based upon amended claim 36. None of the references disclose all of the elements in newly amended claim 36. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections with respect to amended claim 36, and claims dependent thereon, are respectfully requested.

Claims 36-42, 44 and 45 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Graycar et al in view of Bott et al. Claims 36-42, 44 and 45 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sierkstra et al in view of Bott et al. These rejections are respectfully traversed with respect to amended claim 36 and claims dependent thereon.

None of the references teach or suggest, together or alone, all the limitations of amended claim 36. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections with respect to claim 36, and claims dependent thereon, are respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this application are in condition for allowance and issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested. Examiner Slobodyansky invited to contact Applicants at (650) 846-7544 if there are additional questions/concerns.

Respectfully submitted,



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